

MARK JOHN T. PEPITO (PHILIPPINES)
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Daugavpils: A Once in a Lifetime, Life-Changing Experience

Hearing the news about Erasmus+ Mobility Program and being chosen to be one of the students currently taking masters' program in our school to be sent here in Daugavpils University for a short-term study, put my heart in great awe and excitement. This kind of opportunity is not given to everyone and I am very humbled for this rare chance to be studying in one of the most prestigious universities here in Latvia and even in the entire Europe.

Even we encountered some problems with regards to the processing of our requirements especially the visa, all of those tiring moments we spent back in the Philippines were gone right after arriving here. After the plane landed at Riga Airport, I was so ecstatic about the things that I'd get to see especially here in Daugavpils. When we were at the airport, we're warmly welcomed by the lovely Ms. Velta Dilba, she was telling us bits of information and trivia about every place that we got to pass by. The travel from Riga to Daugavpils was quite long and somehow tiring maybe because we travelled from the Philippines to Latvia for a considerable amount of time and we hadn't had enough sleep during that moment. We arrived at Daugavpils around 7 p.m. and we directly headed to our dormitory. We were given the keys for our rooms, we unpacked our luggage, arranged our things and had some decent sleep afterwards. The sun rose up the next day and we got to make friends with our dorm-mates, they were telling us information about the subjects they're currently taking here and some sort of stuffs about their personal lives. Right after that, Ms. Velta toured us to some parts of the city specially to places where we could buy groceries, warmers, and other stuffs for personal use. Consequently, we got the chance to visit the school and met personally some of the people behind this program and eventually learned our class schedules from the graceful Ms. Liene Leikuma, and since our class would start four days after the schedule was given, we spent those free days by walking along the streets of Daugavpils trying to familiarize directions and tried eating to some of the famous food houses located within the heart of the city.

Days have passed and classes have started as well. I felt little nervous on the first day, but I managed to get along with our kind zoology teacher, Ms. Anita Rukmane. We held the first lecture in the Coleopterological Research Center near the border of Belarus. We got to experience stuffs in lined with beetle collection and preparation while staying there and it was really amazing. Aside from that, I got to meet some of the people behind DU's coleopterological research and I was really astonished how humble these people are regardless of what they've achieved in their career and in their life. Days later, we started holding classes for our botany and ecology courses under the supervision of ever-excellent Dr. Ingrida Sauliene. We had a great time listening to her lectures and I am excited doing the things she required us to do in such mentioned courses. Touring around Daugavpils University and seeing its facilities especially the biology laboratories somehow put me in great astonishment. It was my first time seeing such kind of equipment. With that, I could say that the university is really exerting so much effort in terms of providing a conducive learning environment to every student through putting up state-of-the-art tools and facilities for an easy access and delivery of quality transformative education.

The moment we arrived here up until today, I can say that this city is gifted with great, hospitable, and kind people. I have seen Daugavpils not just by its walls but also by its people.

Even sometimes, I and my colleagues have a hard time communicating with the locals because we don't speak a single Latvian or Russian language, but I could clearly see and feel that the people are trying their best to attend to our queries and concerns. Truly, everything I have experienced since day one up until today can be wrapped up by this statement, "It feels like home". The place is so safe, the people are well-disciplined and most of all they radiate positivity.



